



# UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

## Guidelines for Conducting an Event on United States Capitol Grounds

---

The guidelines described below, in accordance with the Traffic Regulations for U.S. Capitol Grounds, are to ensure that events held inside the boundaries of U.S. Capitol Grounds are conducted in a manner that protects public health and safety, yet ensures that the Congressional community can fulfill its legislative responsibility.

Demonstration Activity is defined as: Any demonstrating, parading, picketing, speech making, holding of vigils, sit-ins, or other activities conducted for the purpose of demonstrating approval or disapproval of governmental policies or practices (or the lack thereof), expressing a view on public issues, or bringing into public notice any issue or other matter. Demonstration activity is allowed in designated areas as indicated on Appendix B: "United States Capitol Grounds Demonstration Areas Map."

The U.S. Capitol Grounds must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as applied by the Congressional Accountability Act. As such, any sponsoring person and/or organization that is granted a permit to engage in a demonstration or other organized activity on U.S. Capitol Grounds **shall** maintain and not block in any way all accessible routes (pedestrian walkways). Further, the sponsoring person and/or organization agrees to provide all people with disabilities equal access to the activity as required by the ADA.

**Prohibited Areas:** Groups of any size are prohibited from demonstrating in the following areas:

1. Inside any Congressional Buildings
2. On the steps of the United States Capitol
3. On the steps of any building on Capitol Grounds
4. In any area otherwise closed or restricted for official use
5. In roadways or any area routinely used for vehicular traffic
6. Prohibited areas as identified in the "United States Capitol Grounds Demonstration Areas Map"

The following conditions apply to all activities occurring on U.S. Capitol Grounds and permitted by the Capitol Police Board, to ensure:

1. The safety and convenience of all people who exercise their First Amendment right to free expression.
2. The safety and convenience of all people visiting Congressional Office Buildings as well as the U.S. Capitol Buildings and Grounds.
3. The orderly conduct of Congressional business.

**Applications:**

1. Application to engage in a demonstration or other organized activity on U.S. Capitol Grounds may be submitted in the following manner:
  - a. By mail to the:  
U.S. Capitol Police Special Events Section Room  
102, USCP Headquarters  
119 D Street NE  
Washington, DC 20510



# UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

## Guidelines for Conducting an Event on United States Capitol Grounds

---

**NOTE:** Mail may be delayed up to two (2) weeks due to security procedures.

- b. In person to the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) Special Events Section at the address listed above, between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday
- c. By fax to (202) 228-2429

**Timeliness of Application:** Applications must be submitted at least **TEN (10) days** in advance of the activity to guarantee processing. Applications will be accepted up to one (1) year in advance. Additionally, demonstration applications must satisfy all requirements stated herein before processing can be completed; therefore, it is imperative that the spokesperson responds promptly to all queries from the Special Events Coordinator.

**Number of Participants:** Public safety, primarily based on the amount of space available in the chosen area, will dictate the maximum number of participants allowed in the event. Groups of fewer than twenty (20) persons do not require a permit; however, they are encouraged to notify USCP in advance of the demonstration activity so that available space can be fairly and appropriately allocated. An approved permit will give you or your group priority over a subsequent application by another person or group, or a group demonstrating without a permit.

**Duration of Activity:** Permitted activity may not exceed twenty-four (24) consecutive hours, or seven (7) consecutive days, including time for set-up and clean-up. When completing the application, spokespersons should include set-up and clean-up time in the time requested.

**Signs, Banners, and Placards:** Signs, banners, and placards are permitted as a part of a permitted activity. All supports for these items must not exceed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch at their largest point, have dull ends, and cannot in any way be construed as a weapon. There can be no nails, screws, or bolt-type fasteners protruding from the supports. The following activity is prohibited by law:

1. Offering any item for sale
2. Soliciting contributions
3. Any form of advertising

**NOTE:** *Any display of signs, banners, placards, and related items is strictly prohibited inside all Congressional Buildings.*

**Props and Equipment:** Props, equipment, and other movable facilities reasonably necessary for, and integral to, the activity shall be permitted, provided that prior notice is given on the application and the size, location, and structure of the items conforms to the reasonable conditions, limitations, and restrictions provided for by the Capitol Police Board. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Chairs
2. Tables
3. Stages, risers, and platforms (maximum 2 feet in height)
4. Audio/visual equipment (maximum extension is 13.5 feet wide by 9 feet high)
5. Other props and equipment (maximum of fifteen (15) feet in height)

---

United States Capitol Police Special Events Section

119 D Street NE, Room 101

Washington, DC 20510

Office: (202) 224-8891 / Fax: (202) 228-2429

Office Hours: M-F, 0700-1800

Watch Commander: (202) 225-0908 (25 hours)



## UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

### Guidelines for Conducting an Event on United States Capitol Grounds

---

The USCP reserves the right to limit the size, nature, and scope of props and equipment for reasons of safety and security. At no time will props or equipment be left unattended.

**Shelters:** The setting up, placement, or storage of a shelter (of any kind), or storage of camping equipment, tents, sleeping bags, bedrolls, or bedding is prohibited at all times.

**Temporary Structures:** Temporary structures of any kind may not be erected on Capitol Grounds. This includes tents, cabanas, canopies, and all other types of covered or enclosed structures. No objects shall be tied, nailed, stapled, affixed, fastened, or suspended to any tree, pole, or other landscape or architectural feature on Capitol Grounds.

**Sound Amplification Equipment:** Sound amplification is permitted. However, the sound must be controlled so that it does not disrupt the orderly business of the Congress or unreasonably disturb other persons who are exercising their First Amendment rights or those who are visiting the Capitol Grounds. All sound equipment must be furnished by the applicant and positioned so as to face away from the U.S. Capitol and all Congressional Office Buildings. Electrical power for sound equipment is available in the West Front Grassy Area and the Upper Senate Park. (See map attached to application.)

**Distribution of Literature:** Literature may be distributed to interested persons, at no charge, as a part of a permitted activity. Distribution of literature is prohibited inside the U.S. Capitol and all Congressional Office Buildings. Literature cannot contain promotional advertisements or solicitation.

**Solicitation:** It is prohibited at all times to offer any item for sale; or solicit fares, alms, or contributions; or display any form of advertising on Capitol Grounds.

**Condition of Grounds:** Immediately upon the scheduled conclusion of a permitted activity, all props, equipment, and facilities must be removed from Capitol Grounds. The spokesperson shall take such action as may be necessary so as to leave the space utilized by the activity in the same condition which existed immediately prior to the commencement of the activity.

It is prohibited at any time to climb, remove, or in any way injure any statue, seat, wall, fountain, light poles, elevator towers, or other erection or architectural feature, or any tree, shrub, or landscaping feature within the Capitol Grounds. No person may stand or otherwise enter upon any of the Capitol Visitor Center skylights, fountains, planters, walls, surface level air grates, and generators. In addition, projecting of images on any building on Capitol Grounds shall not be permitted.

**Marches:** Marches are permitted to pass through Capitol Grounds provided the march does not disrupt the orderly business of Congress or impede the equal access by others to the U.S. Capitol and all Congressional Office Buildings. When applying, applicants must identify the specific march route requested and also must provide a copy of a corresponding permit issued by either



## UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

### Guidelines for Conducting an Event on United States Capitol Grounds

---

the Metropolitan Police Department or the National Park Service. Marchers will be required to remain on sidewalks and obey all traffic signals and signs.

**Official Functions of the Congress:** In the event an official function of Congress is scheduled that conflicts with an already permitted activity, participants of the activity must clear the affected area prior to the start of the Congressional function, but may return in keeping with the permit guidelines after the function has concluded or departed Capitol Grounds.

**Filming and Photography:** The use of camera equipment to film or photograph on Capitol Grounds for private or other non-commercial use is permitted. Non-commercial documentary or historical filming is also permitted on a case-by-case basis. The use of tripods or other film or photography enhancement equipment is limited to grassy areas where pedestrian or vehicular traffic will not be impeded.

Commercial filming/photography is only allowed in specified areas of Capitol Grounds and must be preceded by submission of an application for a permit to engage in commercial filming/photography through the USCP Office of Special Events. Once a request for commercial filming/photography has received preliminary approval, a monetary fee for each date specified in the application will be required prior to the issuance of the permit. This fee is payable to the Architect of the Capitol at the following website: Pay.gov.

**Races:** Foot and bike races are permitted to pass through Capitol Grounds on Sundays only. Races must be conducted on one of the five pre-determined routes and must conform to the reasonable conditions, limitations, and restrictions set by the Capitol Police Board. Races shall only pass through Capitol Grounds once; there will be no re-tracing of the route on Capitol Grounds. The solicitation, collection, or transfer of monies (including but not limited to registration fees, as well as the display or use of commercial logos or related advertising or signage) is prohibited at all times on Capitol Grounds.

**Musical Presentations:** Musical presentations are not considered "demonstrations," however, can be permitted in the Upper Senate Park. On weekends, musical presentations are also allowed on the West Front as long as Congress is not in session. Musical presentations are to be small in scale events, such as school band presentations.

**Sleeping or Lying Down:** Sleeping or lying down is prohibited at all times on any paved or improved area including, but not limited to, streets, roads, sidewalks, steps, curbs, gutters, doorways, alcoves, and walls. Sleeping or lying down is prohibited on any unimproved (grassy) area of the Capitol Grounds from one-half (½) hour after sunset to one-half (½) hour before sunrise.

**Parking:** There are no parking or staging areas available for private automobiles, buses, or other vehicles on Capitol Grounds. Buses may utilize Garfield Circle, at the intersection of First Street and Maryland Avenue SW, or Union Station at 50 Massachusetts Avenue NE, to drop off passengers.



## UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

### Guidelines for Conducting an Event on United States Capitol Grounds

---

**Prohibited Items:** The following items are prohibited at all times on Capitol Grounds: any firearm, explosive, club, missile, chemical, or other incendiary device or other weapon. It is also prohibited to use or display any open flame including, but not limited to, ignited candles, torches, lanterns, or lamps. Flashlights and other battery-powered lights are permitted.